

Executive Summary



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Prevalence

Adults

- In 2005, 10.1% of adults (age ≥ 18 years) in North Carolina reported ever having been told by a health care provider that they have asthma. Of those adults in North Carolina, 6.5% of reported currently having asthma.⁵²
- Adult females in North Carolina have a 1.45^a greater odds than adult males to have lifetime asthma (ever having been diagnosed with asthma by a health care provider), and have a 1.79^b greater odds than males to have current asthma.⁵²
- North Carolina adults living in households with an income less than \$15,000 are 1.78 times as likely to have lifetime asthma and are 2.14 times as likely to have current asthma than those who live in households that make more than \$15,000 a year.⁵²



Children

- In 2005, 17.8% of children (age ≤ 17 years) in North Carolina reported ever having been told by a health care provider that they have asthma. Of those children, 11.5% report that they still currently have asthma.⁵³
- Male children in North Carolina have a 1.5^c greater odds to have lifetime asthma (ever having been diagnosed with asthma by a health care provider) as female children in N.C.⁵³
- According to the 2004 National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), the national median for lifetime asthma was 12.2% for children. For current asthma, the national median reported in the 2004 NHIS was 8.5% for children. Although 2004 data are not available for North Carolina children, the 2005 data that are available do suggest that North Carolina's childhood lifetime asthma prevalence (17.8%) and current asthma prevalence (11.5%) greatly exceed the national median.^{14,53}

Asthma Management and Quality of Life

- Almost 50% of North Carolina adults with current asthma reported experiencing asthma symptoms a minimum of once a week over the past 30 days. Approximately 20% of those who reported having

^a Odds Ratio (an approximation of the rate ratios with rare diseases), 95% Confidence Interval (CI) 1.3-1.6

^b Odds Ratio, 95% CI 1.6-2.1

^c Odds Ratio, 95% CI 1.3-1.8

symptoms a minimum of once a week, reported experiencing asthma symptoms every day during those 30 days.⁵²

Asthma Attack or Episode

- Approximately 50% of North Carolinian adults with current asthma experienced an asthma attack or episode in the past 12 months.
- High school females in North Carolina have a higher prevalence of asthma attack (39.5%) than North Carolina high school males (22.6%).⁵⁴
- In 2003, half of children (age ≤ 17 years) with current asthma in North Carolina reported having had an asthma attack or episode in the previous 12 months.³⁷

Missed Activity

- Thirty-two percent of adults in North Carolina with asthma were unable to work or carry out normal activity due to their asthma at least one day during the last 12 months.⁵²
- Of children (age ≤ 17 years) with current asthma in North Carolina, almost half (47.5%) missed at least one day of school due to their asthma in the last year. Of that group, 37% of children with asthma missed between one and nine days of school in the past 12 months due to their asthma, and 10% of children with asthma missed 10 or more days due to their asthma.⁵³

Health Care Utilization

- About 45 percent of North Carolina adults with current asthma have not seen a doctor or health professional for a routine checkup for their asthma in the past 12 months.⁵²
- In 2004, females in North Carolina had a significantly higher asthma hospitalization rate (158 per 100,000) than males (92.8 per 100,000).
- In 2004, the highest asthma hospitalization rates in North Carolina occurred in the youngest age group, ages 0-4 years (312.7 per 100,000). The rates then steadily decreased through middle age and then began increasing again in the 65+ age group to a rate of 210.2 per 100,000.
- Almost a quarter (23.6%) of adults with current asthma in North Carolina visited an ER or urgent care center in the past 12 months. Of that 23.6%, two-thirds went three or more times.
- Almost 25% of children with current asthma in North Carolina visited the hospital emergency room or urgent care clinic because of their asthma in the past 12 months. In North Carolina, African American children were more than twice as likely as white children to have



visited the hospital emergency room or urgent care clinic because of their asthma.⁵³

- In 2004, total charges for hospitalizations in North Carolina for a primary diagnosis of asthma exceeded \$88 million dollars. This represented an average charge of \$8,259 per asthma hospitalization stay.

Mortality

- In North Carolina in 2005, females had a significantly higher mortality rate (17.48 per 1,000,000) due to a primary cause of asthma than males (8.24 per 1,000,000). This data is consistent with previous years.
- Over the previous six years, African American's mortality rate due to asthma (30.39 deaths per million) is significantly higher than the mortality rate due to asthma for whites (11.21 deaths per million).
- Native Americans have a mortality rate due to asthma of 27.9 per 1,000,000 from 1999 to 2004 (2005 census data not available at time of publication). This number is similar to the mortality rate for other minorities in North Carolina, and significantly greater than the white mortality rate due to asthma. However, this mortality rate is based on a small number of deaths (13) and therefore should be interpreted with caution.

